

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



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U.S. Accuses Saddam Loyalists of Attacks

by Chris Tomlinson

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - The commander of coalition ground forces in Iraq said Thursday that recent attacks on U.S. forces were orchestrated by Baath Party groups loyal to ousted dictator Saddam Hussein.

"The war has not ended," Lt. Gen. David McKiernan told reporters at a news conference. "Decisive combat operations against military formations has ended, but these contacts we're having right now are in a combat zone, and it is war, and they are members of (Saddam's) regime that must be removed."



Recent days have seen a sharp escalation in attacks against American forces in Iraq.

McKiernan said the attacks are "being perpetrated by enemies whose future is gone. ... The rest of the population knows that they were thugs under his regime, and they know - and the Iraqi population knows - that they have no future in this country."

On Thursday, a U.S. soldier was killed when his convoy came under fire from a rocket-propelled grenade on a supply route through Iraq, bringing to nine the number of American soldiers who have died around the country this week.

The Pentagon said the soldier was part of a convoy that was attacked north of Baghdad.

In response to the recent violence, McKiernan said he may soon send more troops into combat operations.

McKiernan said the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had been planning to return to the United States in June, was going to remain in Iraq until commanders decided they were no longer needed.

With recent attacks against U.S. soldiers, he said there were no

immediate plans to return the unit to its headquarters at Fort Stewart, Ga.

"Now that the 1st Armored Division has assumed the responsibility for the Baghdad area, I'm working with the V Corps commander on different options," McKiernan said. The V Corps is an umbrella operation that coordinates American forces in Iraq.

"If we need to apply some of the combat power of the 3rd Infantry Division elsewhere in Iraq, we will certainly not hesitate to do that," McKiernan said.

He said one area where more troops may be sent is Fallujah, 45 miles west of Baghdad.

Two U.S. soldiers were killed and nine wounded there Sunday night during a firefight at a U.S. checkpoint in the town of 200,000 people, known for supporting Saddam and his Baath Party.



U.S. soldiers arrest an Iraqi man who claimed to be a businessman after finding a handgun in his car at a checkpoint in Baghdad on Thursday, May 29, 2003. Routine security patrols continue in the Iraqi capital, where five attacks against U.S. forces have occurred in the past few days. (AP Photo/Ali Haider)

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Blair visits Iraq, praises British troops

BASRA, Iraq (AP) - British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who gambled his political fortunes on President Bush's decision to invade, urged Iraqi children Thursday to stay in school and praised his nation's troops for winning a war and imposing a responsible peace.

The first foreign leader to visit Iraq was a big one - the chief U.S. ally in a coalition assembled to topple Saddam Hussein, partially on the still-unproven grounds that the Iraqi ruler was developing chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

The prime minister, his graying hair tousled by a furnace-like desert breeze, visited a grade school, a police station and a cloistered military compound, where he addressed about 400 of his country's troops.

"You fought the battle, you won the battle, and you fought it with great courage and valor," he told the soldiers. "But it didn't stop there. You then went on to try to make something of the country you had liberated. And I think that's a lesson for armed forces everywhere, the world over."

Britain has handled the southeast corner of Iraq, while the United States has occupied the rest. That includes the sprawling capital, Baghdad, where banditry, looting and attacks on U.S. forces have lingered in the vacuum created by the collapse of Saddam's repressive regime.



British Prime Minister Tony Blair, right, walks alongside General Peter Wall, as he arrives Thursday May 29, 2003, in Basra, Iraq. Blair touched down aboard an RAF Hercules C130 plane after flying to the southern Iraqi city from Kuwait, to become the first western leader to visit the country since hostilities ceased six weeks ago. (AP photo / Stefan Rousseau, PA)

Some observers credit Britain's people-friendly methods of mingling with the locals for the relatively stable civil order in Basra. But British diplomats concede that southern Iraq was more densely populated by the grateful Shiite Muslims that Saddam had violently suppressed for decades, while Baghdad and other parts in the U.S. domain are filled with Sunni Muslims, some of whom benefitted from supporting Saddam.

Britain's special representative in Iraq,

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Troops find no bodies at Saddam 'bunker' site

by Dafna Linzer

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - U.S. troops have found no sign of bodies or even a bunker at the site where intelligence had said Saddam Hussein was sleeping on the war's opening night, a senior officer said Thursday.

Acting on an intelligence tip, U.S. forces launched their campaign on March 20 by firing more than 40 Tomahawk missiles on Dora Farms, a neighborhood south of Baghdad where the Iraqi leader was said to be with his sons.

"We looked real hard," Col. Tim Madere, an unconventional weapons specialist with the Army's V Corp, told The Associated Press. "We didn't find any bodies or bunkers," he said a day after visiting the site.

CBS News first reported on his comments on Wednesday.

Even though no bunker was found, U.S. officials said the information regarding the presence of Saddam and other regime leaders the night of the Dora Farms strike is still regarded as credible.

Officials have said it was unlikely any bodies would be recovered from the site because the Iraqis had plenty of time to remove them.

Madere is part of the U.S.-led search for Saddam-era weapons of

mass destruction. Looking for underground bunkers is a large part of the job, and weapons teams are occasionally also sent to gather evidence on the former regime and crimes it may have committed.

The source of the CIA tip that launched the war's opening salvo is a closely guarded secret. Officials will only say the intelligence was regarded as extremely reliable.

Initially, a source told the CIA that Saddam's sons, Qusai and Odai, and possibly their father, would be spending the night at a residential compound in Dora Farms, located along the Tigris among rows of trees.

The source's information was deemed so credible that CIA Director George J. Tenet personally took it to the Pentagon, where he described it to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld before the information was taken to the White House.

The mission was not believed to have been successful. A disheveled Saddam appeared a day later on Iraqi TV and made a second appearance a week later. He was last reported seen in Baghdad on April 9.

The United States does not know whether Saddam is alive or dead. Several messages released in his name have surfaced since major hostilities came to an end but there was no way to confirm their authenticity.

Blair visits Iraq, praises British troops continued

John Sawers, who met with Blair along with the U.S. reconstruction czar for Iraq, L. Paul Bremer, acknowledged that a capital city rife with remnants of Saddam's regime has a crime wave "that is most difficult to get on top of."

Basra, however, appears to have made the "remarkable" strides that Blair praised.

Iraq's second-largest city was the first major urban area to fall during the war, the first to quickly descend into looting and anarchy - and the first to take on a veneer of normalcy.

Shops are stocked with everything from skinned goats to software, electronics equipment, pharmaceuticals and a cornucopia of produce. Brilliantly lit boulevards are packed with people well after nightfall, and a highly visible police force nabs criminals and controls congested intersections.

Yet electricity remains strictly rationed and prices for necessities have ballooned in an exploding free market. The grade school that Blair visited draws only half its prewar attendance, and the teachers remain unpaid, said Khalidi al-Shawi, a former headmistress on hand for the Blair visit.

"A lot of the students live far away, and the buses aren't running," she said. "Some parents are keeping their children at home because they believe this year will not count as a full academic year because of the war."

The prime minister flew into Kuwait on Wednesday and spent roughly half the day in southern Iraq. Blair, sporting a white, open-collared shirt and blue chino pants, got a wild reception from middle school students delighted by the attention.

"I think you have done a magnificent job," Blair told pupils and teachers, speaking through an interpreter in a school courtyard. "I think you can be so proud of what you have achieved here."

Sixth-grader Mohammad Ade Mohammad, a fan of disco and soccer star Renaldo who wants to be a doctor, was overjoyed. "He and Bush liberated us from that criminal Saddam, that son of a criminal," he said. Any insult preceded by "son of" is serious stuff in Iraq.

As for Blair, the 14-year-old said: "He told us to become heroes. He told us to stay in school. We're happy that he has come a long way and that he loves children."

The war on Iraq was heatedly opposed by allies France and Germany, along with many Britons. Other critics feared that booting out the superficially religious Saddam, whose whereabouts remain unknown, might make way for a fundamentalist Shiite state espousing the same philosophy as anti-American terror-network leader Osama bin Laden.



British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is greeted by school children in Basra, Iraq, Thursday, May 29, 2003. Blair, flew into Basra from Kuwait, to become the first foreign leader to visit postwar Iraq. Addressing British troops Blair told them that their invasion of Iraq was professional and their methods of keeping the peace have been "remarkable." (AP Photo/Stefan Rousseau/WPA pool)

Blair's praise for his troops was unequivocal.

"This wasn't the pretend stuff that happens in films. It was real war, with real bloodshed and real casualties," Blair told about 400 members of 7 Armored Brigade, the "Desert Rats."

"And there were people you will have known that aren't going back home," he said. "And we grieve for them, and we pay respect to them for everything they did and the sacrifice that they made."



British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is greeted by an Iraqi school child in Basra, Iraq, (AP Photo/Stefan Rousseau/WPA pool)

German peacekeeper killed in Afghanistan

by Todd Pitman

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) - A land mine exploded Thursday underneath a vehicle carrying two German peacekeepers, killing one and wounding the other.

The explosion was a "tragic accident" and there is no evidence that it was a deliberate attack on the soldiers, German Defense Minister Peter Struck said in Berlin.

They were on patrol in a two-vehicle convoy about 10 miles south of Kabul when the mine exploded, said Lt. Col. Paul Kolken, a spokesman for the International Security Assistance Force.

Authorities were attempting to determine when the mine was placed in the road.

After 25 years of war, Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries and its countryside is littered with unexploded munitions.

The injured soldier received treatment for injuries to his face at an International Security Assistance Force hospital, where he was in stable condition, officials said. His wounds were not life-threatening, Struck said.

The incident followed a plane crash Monday in Turkey in which 62 peacekeepers from Spain died as they returned home after a four-month tour of duty in Afghanistan.

"This tragedy, coming while ISAF is still grieving the loss of 62 Spanish colleagues, has saddened the military community greatly," the international force said in a statement.

About 5,000 peacekeepers are in Afghanistan's capital to help maintain order. Germany and the Netherlands are in joint command of the force, but NATO is scheduled to take control in August. German and Dutch forces will be replaced with 1,800 Canadian soldiers, Kolken said.

On May 15, two Norwegian peacekeeping troops were shot and wounded by an Afghan soldier as they drove north of Kabul. Two days earlier, a British soldier was slightly wounded when an Afghan man threw a grenade at a peacekeeping base.

In March, the international peacekeeping force's headquarters in Kabul was hit by a rocket, but there were no injuries. Also in March, an explosive device set off by remote control in Kabul wounded one Dutch peacekeeper and killed an Afghan translator.

North Korea accuses south of sending warships north

by Samuel Len

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea accused South Korea of sending warships across a disputed sea border and warned Seoul further moves could lead to "irrevocable serious consequences," ratcheting up tensions on the divided Korea peninsula.

The North's warning, carried by the official KCNA news agency, followed what the South Korean Defense Ministry said was three successive days of incursions into southern waters by North Korean fishing boats, most recently Wednesday.

Tensions have been high on the Korean peninsula for more than seven months, since the United States said the communist North had revealed it was pursuing a secret nuclear arms program.

Even before that, there had been clashes between the two Koreas at sea. Last June and in 1999 there were deadly naval gun battles in the same Yellow Sea area off the west coast — prime fishing grounds especially during the June crab catching season.

KCNA said a series of South Korean naval vessels of various types had crossed into what it said were northern waters in the past three days.

"The ceaseless infiltration of warships into the waters where serious military conflicts occurred last year cannot be construed otherwise than a premeditated and deliberate provocation on the part of the South Korean military to spark one more new shocking incident in these waters, joining the U.S. imperialists in their desperate 'nuclear racket'," it said.

The KCNA report added: "The South Korean military authorities should not misjudge the self-restraint of soldiers of the (North) Korean People's Army, but stop running amuck, well aware that any slightest military provocation may entail irrevocable serious consequences."

In a separate report, KCNA said North Korean leader Kim Jong-il had visited a naval base Wednesday, the latest in a series of military trips.

South Korea said two North Korean fishing boats intruded into its waters briefly Wednesday, the third crossing at the potential flashpoint in as many days.

South Korean naval vessels turned away the fishing boats by broadcasting warnings.

Seoul sent a message to Pyongyang through the South Korean Red Cross Wednesday, urging a halt to such incidents.

The de facto sea border is called the Northern Limit Line, or NLL. It was drawn by U.S.-led United Nations forces at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended without a peace treaty, leaving the two Koreas technically in a state of war.

North Korea has demanded a new sea frontier be drawn further to the south and in 1999 declared the NLL invalid.

'Be strong and of good courage' comforts grieving father

"If you've been in combat, war is ugly. They were only able to recognize Russell because of his dog tags."

Fighting back sobs, the father described Russell, nicknamed "Rusty," as an Eagle Scout, high school soccer team captain and homecoming king. But he was most proud of his son as a Ranger.

"The 75th Rangers, that's what I'd call a real outfit," Rippetoe said. "They live and breathe together, and die together."

He recalled the haunting visit to inform him and his wife of the tragic news. He said he knew it was bad when he looked out the door of his Maryland home almost two months ago and saw soldiers.

"I've knocked on doors and said, 'Your son or daughter was killed,'" he said. "When those three people showed up at my door, we knew."

The 56-year-old disabled veteran of two tours in Vietnam told the chaplain and casualty officers: "You don't have to say anything. I've been there."

Looking back, the father said he felt his son's uneasiness before he shipped out for Iraq. Then he saw evidence of the same in the state of Russell's apartment near Fort Benning when he went to dispose of the property.

"It was creepy," Joe Rippetoe said. "All of his stuff was laid out as if he had a premonition. It wasn't Russell. It was too organized." The father noted that he gave away many of his son's belongings to his unit. He said he even donated Russell's car to a soldier there.

The father has flown an illuminated flag every day and night since his son's earlier deployment to Afghanistan. "Our boys fight for our

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aw so much dying," he recalled.



Peruvian soldiers patrol the streets in front of the Justice Palace in downtown Lima, Peru, Wednesday, May 28, 2003. Faced with growing protests by farmers and government workers, President Alejandro Toledo declared a 30-day state of emergency and authorized the military to clear strikers from Peru's major highways. (AP Photo/Martin Mejia)

Iraq suffering from 'freedom deficit'

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 28, 2003 – Iraq can be a model for other Arab nations as Iraqi citizens work to establish a representative government in their country, a senior defense policy maker said today.

Douglas Feith, defense undersecretary for policy, held a news conference with Arab journalists at the Foreign Press Center. He quoted from a U.N. Arab Fund for Economic Development study that said the "wave of democracy" that washed over Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s "barely touched" the Arab world.

The study said the area is suffering from "a freedom deficit." Iraq, now free of Saddam Hussein and his regime, is an opportunity for Arab nations to join the wave of democracy and eliminate the freedom deficit, Feith said.

"Iraq has the chance to make a fresh start and can demonstrate that such a country can become politically free and economically prosperous," he said.

Iraq has a number of advantages to build on. The country has an educated population, oil wealth and water resources. "This makes for an exciting moment in world affairs right now, and it is an opportunity that we are focused on," Feith said.

Feith said the process is not "nation building" – a term George W. Bush disparaged as he ran for president. "(The term 'nation building') is, in our view, disrespectful of the people in the country, ..." Feith said. "The Iraqi nation is going to be built by Iraqis, and it is not for non-Iraqis to build Iraq. The role that we are playing there is to help set conditions that will allow Iraqis to build their own country in their own way."

The first step in the process was removing Hussein. Disorder, looting, riots and other security problems accompanied the collapse of the regime, he said. "I don't think at all that the disorder that inevitably follows the collapse of a tyrannical regime becomes, in retrospect, an argument for the tyranny," Feith said. "One of the terrible things about tyranny, you can argue, is that it always leaves a degree of disorder in its wake. But that is a problem that one should lay at the feet of the tyrant and not the liberators. And I think we're actually doing a good job in getting the law and order situation ... under control."

Restoring security is the prime responsibility of the Provisional Coalition Authority now, he said. "The coalition has to protect the efforts of Iraqis to reconstruct their country from Ba'athists, who are trying to ... create chaos and produce nostalgia for Saddam, and also from anti-democratic interference from neighboring countries," Feith said.

He gave reporters a "sitrep" – situation report – on progress in Iraq.

Regarding security, he told them that there are now 45,000 troops in

Baghdad with 21,000 actively involved in security operations. Coalition officials are working to reconstitute the Iraqi police, and allies are providing police advisors and trainers. "Efforts are being made to restart the courts and get the judicial system functioning," he said.

The United States is working to get more countries involved in the stabilization forces for Iraq. "We hope by July to have two, perhaps three, additional divisions come to help contribute to security in the country," Feith said. A total of 15 nations – including some from the Arab world – will participate, he said.

The coalition authority is working to restore basic human services in Iraq, Feith said, adding that some of the services are "in very bad shape." Water, electricity and sewage are problems in Baghdad, while other services – such as hospitals and schools – are problems in other areas. While the war caused some damage, "the really sorry state of a lot of these institutions goes back before the war," he said.

Before the war, only 60 percent of Iraqis had safe drinking water. Half of Basra's water treatment plants didn't work. "Iraq before the war produced only 40 percent of its annual grain requirement, and 23 percent of children under the age of five were malnourished," Feith said.

Now, Baghdad has water at about 75 percent of its pre-war levels, and the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance and UNICEF are planning to supply clean water to all the regions of Iraq, he said. "There is no food crisis. There are no major epidemics. There is no major health care crisis in Iraq now," he said.

The World Food Program and the U.S. Agency for International Development are distributing nearly half a million metric tons of food per month.

"Primary schools opened on May 4th," Feith said. Secondary schools will soon open, and money has been appropriated to purchase textbooks.

"Partly because of the speed with which the military operations progressed, the oil wells that were wired and were set up for destruction by Saddam Hussein did not get blown up," he said. "Oil production is underway and marketing should begin within the next few weeks."

The coalition will continue to guide the Iraqis as they move toward a representative government. But the coalition wants no permanent post in the country. "We retain the intention and the policy that we have had of getting ... as much responsibility into the hands of Iraqis as early as possible," he said. "This has been our view all along. Iraq belongs to the Iraqis."

"We want Iraq to achieve freedom and prosperity and a place in the world as a respected country and a country that governs itself proudly."

SFOR ready to step in as Russians leave Bosnia

by Ivana Avramovic, Stars and Stripes

CAMP UGLJEVIK, Bosnia and Herzegovina — The Russian Military Contingent lowered the flag Wednesday on its seven-year peacekeeping service in Bosnia.

The unit, which covered the northeastern part of Multinational Brigade North, announced late last year it would be leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Russian authorities gave normalization in the country as the reason for their departure.

The transition from the Russian contingent will be “very smooth and seamless to the population” since Stabilization Forces has spent the past several weeks in the process, said Lt. Gen. William Ward, peacekeeping force commander.

“SFOR is reorganizing at this time, so no vacuum is created when the Russians pull out,” said Maj. Jeff Coverdale, a Multinational Brigade North spokesman.

A plan to cover the former Russian section was already being prepared on the day of the ceremony, but it is not finalized.

Coverdale could not specify which troops will be in charge of the former Russian area of responsibility or if they will be moving to Camp Ugljevik.

The fate of the camp has not been decided, either.

Almost 40 nations still have peacekeeping troops in Bosnia.

Russian forces reached an all-time high of about 1,500 troops in Bosnia in 1996, during the first year of the mission, and remained at that level until 1999. Then the number started to decline, reaching a low of 300 troops at the time of their departure.

“Your successful activities not only supported the prestige of the Russian Federation armed force, but also demonstrated the effectiveness of cooperation with military contingents of different countries including the cooperation of Russia and NATO,” Col. Sergey Mikhailovich Shakurin, commander of the last Russian Military Contingent rotation in Bosnia, said to his troops during the ceremony.

Ward commended the Russian troops and their contribution.

He pointed out that the Russian troops’ departure was “a very positive sign of the progress of this country.”

The number of Stabilization Troops continuing the peacekeeping mission should remain at around 12,000, Ward said.

“In no way does [the Russian pullout] mean that the commitment of NATO to ensuring a safe and secure environment here is any way at all reduced,” he said.



Air Force Academy graduates toss their hats as the Air Force Thunderbird drill team flies overhead during graduation ceremonies at the Air Force Academy, Colo., on Wednesday, May 28, 2003. (AP Photo/Ed Andrieski)

President Bush set to depart on five-day overseas trip

by Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 29, 2003 – President Bush will discuss the Middle East peace process and rebuilding Iraq, among other issues, during a five-day overseas trip set to begin May 30, a top adviser said May 28.

The president will visit Poland, Russia, France, Egypt, Jordan and Qatar before returning to Washington June 5, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said in an afternoon press conference at the White House.

Highlights of the trip include a summit with the leaders of the Palestinian authority, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Bahrain June 3 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, and a meeting the following day with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas in Aqaba, Jordan.

“The president believes that this is a new opportunity for peace (in the Middle East) at the end of the war in Iraq, and particularly with changes in the Palestinian leadership,” Rice said. She added that the Israeli government’s acceptance of the administration’s “road map” plan and recent comments Sharon has made are also promising steps.

But, Rice said, “this is going to be a long process, and it is going to have ups and downs as it always had.”

In Qatar June 5, Bush will meet with Iraq’s civil administrator, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, and Army Gen. Tommy Franks, who commands operations in a broad area encompassing Afghanistan and Iraq, and visit coalition troops stationed in that tiny Gulf nation.

Rice noted the president is “particularly looking forward to” meeting

‘Be strong and of good courage’ comforts grieving father continued

flag and our country at all hours,” he noted.

The father is constantly reminded of his loss, whether it’s opening an item that belonged to Russell or seeing a young man his son’s age at a local breakfast place.

“Today, a young man Rusty’s age, 26 or 27, was talking with another man,” Joe said. “And I looked over and I was jealous. I don’t have a son. I am the last Rippetoe. I saw so much killing and suffering in Vietnam. Coupled with what happened to my son, it’s hard to take.”

The veteran of 28 years as an Army officer, though deeply saddened by recent events, holds his head high.

“I am one proud father, to be blessed with the family life I’ve had,” he said. “I would join and go back in the service in a nanosecond if they’d let me.”

(Dennis Ryan is a staff writer for the Pentagongram, the Ft. Myer, Va., military community newspaper.)

with Bremer and Franks “to talk about how the reconstruction effort is going (in Iraq) and how we’re going to discharge our responsibilities to the Iraqi people.”

In response to a reporter’s question about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, Rice said the only way someone might believe the former regime had none is to “believe that Saddam Hussein was willing to live under sanctions for 12 years for no good reason.”

“I just don’t think that argument is credible,” she added.

Also during this trip, Bush will join Russian President Vladimir Putin in celebrating the 300th anniversary of the city of St. Petersburg, Russia, and will speak to the people of Poland at that country’s Vavel Castle. Also in Poland, he will visit the sites of Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau.

The visit to Poland is “to honor the memory of innocents lost in the terror of the Third Reich and the Holocaust,” Rice said, “and to remind us all of the dangers of evil unchecked.”

Guard transformation of command structure seen as important chapter

by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell, USA, Special to American Forces Press Service

ARLINGTON, Va., May 28, 2003 — National Guard transformation took a big leap forward when leaders from the 54 states and U.S. territories supported the historic initiative for changing their organization’s command structure earlier this month.

The National Guard’s adjutants general reached consensus with the ideas put forward by Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, the Guard Bureau’s new chief, to consolidate separate state headquarters for members of the Army and Air Guard into joint, or combined, headquarters.

Idaho’s Maj. Gen. John Kane said the National Guard generals agreed the time is ripe for change and that they support the requirements for the 21st century that Blum presented during the spring conference of the Adjutants General Association of the United States. Kane is the association’s president.

Blum has advocated transforming the command structures for the 460,000 members of the Army and Air Guard since becoming the Guard Bureau’s 25th chief April 11.

He has emphasized that idea to members of Congress, to the national news media and to many National Guard members. He has also insisted that the National Guard retain its warfighting capabilities.

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Guard transformation of command structure seen as important chapter continued

"Homeland defense is the National Guard's most important priority. Make no mistake about that. We have been performing that mission since 1636, and the American people expect no less of the National Guard during these trying times," said the no-nonsense Blum about the war against global terrorism.

Some 148,000 citizen-soldiers and airmen were serving in the United States and in 44 other countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan, Blum pointed out during the adjutants general meeting.

"We will continue to honor that commitment by transforming into a more efficient and accessible force," he said. "We are not going to let turf and parochialism get in the way of doing what is right for America.

"We fight jointly, and we need to train and operate on a daily basis in a joint environment so we can make the transition (from citizen to soldier) very quickly. After all, our symbol is the Minuteman," Blum said during a Pentagon press briefing May 16.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld also addressed jointness at the U.S. Naval Academy commencement in Annapolis, Md., May 23. "The wars and conflicts in this 21st century will not be fought by individual services—whether Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines," Rumsfeld told graduating midshipmen. "Rather, they will be fought by joint and, often, combined forces.

"You will have to think, train and exercise jointly," he emphasized, "because, let there be no doubt, that is how the wars of your future will be fought."

"We will be better understood by our active duty counterparts," Blum predicted. We will then be seen for what we are — reliable, ready and accessible."

Blum has ordered the National Guard Bureau, which currently consists of a joint staff and separate directorates for the Army and Air Guard, to become a joint headquarters by July 1. He has asked the states to establish joint headquarters, and do away with state area commands for Army Guard forces, by Oct. 1.

Lt. Gen. Roger Schultz, Army Guard director, and Lt. Gen. Daniel James III, Air Guard director, will serve as Guard Bureau deputy chiefs, Blum explained. The next vice chief of the Guard Bureau will become the chief of staff for the joint bureau, he added.

Blum is also urging the states to include members of other military components, including the Coast Guard, in their joint headquarters. He said he would do that at the Guard Bureau base in Arlington.

"We will not fund state area commands by Oct. 1. We will fund joint headquarters," Blum said in central Ohio. "The joint world is no longer a theory. It's a reality."

"The adjutants general accepted very favorably the things that Lt. Gen. Blum laid out for them," said Kane, Idaho adjutant general. He noted they could meet the Oct. 1 deadline for reorganizing the state commands into joint headquarters.

"It will push us, but that's fine." Kane said. "Sometimes it's better to be pushed than to be pulled."

Maj. Gen. Robert G.F. Lee, Hawaii's adjutant general, said he has already begun forming a joint National Guard headquarters in that state.

"I didn't know how far I could go with it. But Lt. Gen. Blum has made it clear I can make our headquarters as joint as I want to," he explained.

Lee, who commanded U.S. Army Reserve forces in the Pacific Command before becoming Hawaii's National Guard leader, predicted he could easily entice other reserve components to assign representatives to his state's headquarters.

Officials claim this transformation is as significant for the country's largest military reserve force as are two other chapters of National Guard history.

One was the Militia Act of 1903, also called the Dick Act, that established federal guidelines for organizing, training and equipping the Guard in line with standards established for the regular Army. The second was the creation of the Air National Guard in 1947 that led to separate Army and Air Guard directorates.

The adjutants general, 34 of whom belong to the Army Guard, hope that forming joint headquarters that are more in line with the active forces will streamline the process for mobilizing Army Guard soldiers for federal duty.

"We don't need to be double checked and triple checked every time our troops get activated," Lee said. The Air Guard routinely deploys troops from their home stations, it was pointed out.

The adjutants general also heeded Blum's proposals for improving the Guard's capabilities for defending the homeland.

Homeland defense, he explained, ranges from full-scale combat operations in places like Iraq and Afghanistan to flying combat air patrols over U.S. cities, providing security along international borders and at ports of entry, and safeguarding air bases in this country.

It reflects the National Guard's dual role as state forces commanded by the nation's governors and as a federal force when ordered to active duty by the president.

Blum's proposals focus on enhancing capabilities, adding to mission-essential task lists for combat arms units, and task organizing. They include:

Organizing chemical, biological and incident response task forces to include assets from the Guard's 32 full-time civil support teams, enhanced medical companies that can decontaminate and treat 150 people per hour, engineer companies with special search and rescue equipment, and combat units trained to support law enforcement agencies.

Pacific soldiers train with Thai counterparts

by Sgt. Monica R. Garreau

UTAPAO NAVAL AIR STATION, Thailand (Army News Service, May 28, 2003) - More than 7,000 Pacific-based military service members deployed to Thailand to strengthen the ties between the Royal Thai armed forces and all four branches of the U.S. military.

Cobra Gold 2003 is an annual joint exercise that is taking place May 16-30. The 25th Infantry Division (Light) and U.S. Army Hawaii has over 1,700 soldiers and pocket-size elements from Fort Richardson, Alaska, will focus on peace enforcement operations.

There are two main training events for the exercise. The first is the combined training that includes hands on jungle survival, weapons cross training, and aircraft static load training.

During the jungle survival training American soldiers watched as their Royal Thai counterparts skinned lizards alive, cooked rats, and killed a chicken by breaking its neck and drinking its blood as a source of hydration.

An infantryman from Hawaii took part in the training and killed his first chicken.

"I respect his willingness to be outgoing and to build good relations with the Thai army by doing that," said Pvt. 2 Christian Punt, an infantryman from Hawaii about his comrade. "At the same time, I think he's a little crazy."

The second major event will be a simulation driven Command Post Exercise where division staff members will command units on a virtual battlefield.

"The division and Thai staffs will learn from each other on command post operations and the military decision making process," said Maj. Norman Spears, an exercise chief from 25th ID (L), Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

"The sort of peace enforcement and peacekeeping scenarios at the



Soldiers in the Royal Thai army demonstrate how to catch a cobra for American soldiers during Cobra Gold 2003. More than 7,000 American service members participated in the joint exercise. (Photo by Sgt. Monica R. Garreau)

heart of Cobra Gold's CPX are off the front pages of today's papers," Spears said. "The humanitarian and media elements, which have received heavy coverage in Iraq, were an integral part of the Cobra Gold scenario last year and will be again this year."

Although the major training events will involve the infantry and division staff, the support units will also receive quite a bit of training as well.

"This exercise provides constructive benefits to the people of Thailand through combined U.S. and Thai medical and civil affairs projects. As an example, engineer units will work at three construction sites to improve local schools and a child development center," Spears said.

(Editor's note: Sgt. Monica R. Garreau is a member of the 17th Public Affairs Detachment.)

Guard transformation of command structure seen as important chapter continued

Expanding the Guard's involvement in ground-based missile defense over and above the unit that is currently being formed to staff a facility that is expected to be operational in Alaska by Oct. 1, 2004.

Creating quick and rapid Guard reaction forces that are immediately available to state and federal governments and that are trained for both combat and security duties.

These new forces can be formed with personnel and resources that are already available to the Guard, Blum said. They will not require a lot of new, expensive, sophisticated equipment.

"This will require a new way of thinking," the Guard Bureau chief added. "Most real transformation happens right between your ears. It's not about hardware, and it's not about information technology. It's about how you think. And we need to change the way we think."

(Master Sgt. Bob Haskell is assigned to the National Guard Bureau Public Affairs Office in Arlington, Va.)



[www.defenselink.mil/
specials/tribute/](http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/tribute/)

Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz flies to Asia

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz departed Washington on Thursday on a five-day trip to Singapore, South Korea and Japan to discuss U.S. strategy and military presence with leaders in the key region.

Wolfowitz's aircraft took off from Andrews Air Force Base for Singapore, where he will attend a conference of Asian security and defense officials sponsored by the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

On Saturday he will speak to the conference on evolving American strategy in the Asia-Pacific in Washington's declared war on terrorism before going to Seoul and Tokyo. He will return to Washington on Monday.

Wolfowitz will meet senior government officials in all three countries, and Pentagon officials said that growing tension in the region over North Korea's nuclear ambitions would be a major issue on the agenda.

The secretary is expected to hear questions on the Pentagon's recently announced study of likely shifts in U.S. military posture in Asia and elsewhere around the globe after the war in Iraq. Such moves would be aimed at addressing both the threat from both guerrilla groups and competition with China for power and influence in Asia.

Some charges dropped against accused grenade attacker

Associated Press

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — Military officials have dropped some of the charges against a soldier accused of a grenade attack on his comrades in Kuwait during the war in Iraq.

The charges against Sgt. Hasan K. Akbar had included two counts of premeditated murder and 17 counts of attempted murder. The Army said Wednesday Akbar now faces just three counts of attempted murder along with the premeditated murder counts.

Two service members were killed and 14 injured in the March 23 attack on members of the 101st Airborne Division. Military authorities have not outlined a motive.

Officials said some of the minor charges were eliminated so that prosecutors could focus on the major charges.

"It is fairly common ... for some of the lesser charges to be dropped," said Master Sgt. Kelly A. Tyler, a spokeswoman at Fort Campbell, which is home to the 101st.

Akbar, 32, will face an Article 32 hearing, similar to a grand jury proceeding in a civilian court, sometime in June, Tyler said.

The Army has assigned a team of attorneys to assist Akbar, though he has the right to hire his own civilian attorney.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has announced that the Pentagon is studying — in close consultation with Seoul — the possible future removal of some of the 37,000 American troops stationed in South Korea.

That and other potential regional shifts in U.S. presence would be based on a growing ability to more quickly send mobile American forces to the region from home bases in the United States.

The Los Angeles Times reported on Thursday that the United States was considering the possible removal of thousands of U.S. Marines from Okinawa and perhaps establishing a military presence in Singapore and Malaysia. The report said the U.S. military also might seek access by its warships to Vietnam.

In Seoul, Wolfowitz will speak to the Korean Chamber of Commerce. He will also hold media availabilities in Seoul and Tokyo, the Defense Department said.

Pentagon reporters to get protective masks

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Reporters who regularly cover the Pentagon headquarters of the U.S. military will next week be given "escape masks" for protection from chemical and biological attack, the Defense Department said on Thursday.

The head-covering mask, also being provided to more than 20,000 military and civilian employees in the sprawling building on the banks of the Potomac River, will be provided to journalists on Monday after a brief training session.

Dozens of reporters entered the building almost daily during the recent war with Iraq, but the "masks will be issued only to those media personnel who are assigned office space in the Pentagon," the department said in a brief announcement.

The Defense Department has purchased 80,000 of the head-covering masks at a cost of about \$150 each to protect employees and visitors to its headquarters and at more than 40 other buildings leased by the military in the nation's capital.

The move was sparked by hijacked airliner attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center in New York in September 2001 and accelerated by the prospect of terror strikes using deadly gases or toxins.

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Old telephone scam rings anew

by Chris Walz, Pentagon staff writer

The Homeland Security Department released a warning this week to inform the public of a reoccurring scam gaining momentum once again.

Victims could find unauthorized long-distance charges on their phone bill. The "90#" telephone scam allows perpetrators full access to place long distance calls on a victim's phone bill.

A caller posing as a telephone company employee or technician says he is testing the phone service. The individual tells the victim to dial "9-0-#" and then hang up the phone.

Doing so, according to Homeland Security, will give the caller access to the phone line and can make unlimited long-distance calls until the victim notices the excessive phone bill.

Verizon, MCI, Bell Atlantic and many other telephone service providers have verified the process to work.

"This type of scam isn't new and it resurfaces from time to time in a slightly different form," said Verizon's Mid-Atlantic media relations director Harry Mitchell. "The objective of these scams is the same — to gain a person's confidence so the person gives the scammer

access to a telephone line. And no one should give such access to an unknown caller."

Mitchell said the scam is most often associated with businesses which need to dial "9" to access an outside line. The "0" will connect to an operator and the "#" will bypass recorded instructions. Businesses are also targeted because the charges can be easily overlooked on an invoice.

Sandra Arnette, a local Verizon representative, said customers should be cautious if asked for any assistance from someone claiming to be an employee of Verizon or another telecommunications company. She said Verizon and most other service provider technicians can test telephone lines and equipment without asking for such assistance.

"Probe the caller for more information — an employee identification number, supervisor's name and telephone number or other information that could help verify whether the caller is an employee or a scammer," said Mitchell. "Or ask the caller for a number where you can call him back and verify the caller's identity before returning the call. When faced with this type of response, most of these scam artists will leave you alone."

Mitchell said the scam rarely occurs to home phone lines because there is no need to dial "9" to get an outside dial tone. He said urban legends exist claiming dialing various three digit codes, like "90#" or the popular "*69," will result in the same effect on home phone lines. He said the urban legends are mostly untrue.

"I'm not aware of any of those codes that work," he said. "That doesn't mean anybody should let their guard down. Scams are always changing and one that actually works could be out there somewhere. New scams are presenting themselves every day."

Customers who feel they have been victimized by such a scam should contact their long distance company or Bell Atlantic.

Homeland Security said scam victims in a federal workplace should call Federal Protective Services at (877) 719-4894.

If the incident occurred on a home phone line, victims should call local authorities and their telephone service provider.

More information on telephone fraud and prevention tips can be found at www.fraud.org/telemarketing/teleinfo.htm.

Soldier dies in attack; 2 civilians die in separate incident

by Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 29, 2003 – Two incidents in the past day have led to the deaths of one American soldier and two Iraqi civilians who died in an apparent attack on a U.S. checkpoint.

A U.S. soldier, who has not been identified, "was killed by hostile gunfire while traveling on a main supply route" today near Logistics Support Area Anaconda, a U.S. Central Command news release said.

The soldier was evacuated to a military hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

In a separate incident late May 28, two Iraqi civilians died "when they attempted to drive their vehicle through a coalition checkpoint" in Samarra, according to another CENTCOM release.

Command officials reported the checkpoint was "well-established and well-lit" and that soldiers fired "numerous warning shots" as the vehicle approached at about 40 mph. The soldiers then fired at the vehicle with a tank-mounted machine gun. Two other civilians in the vehicle were injured and taken to a nearby hospital.

In a deadly week for American soldiers, three other soldiers have been killed and at least 12 wounded in enemy attacks since May 25 in Iraq. Another three deaths and three injuries have been attributed to accidents.



3Korea - 50 years ago this week, May 29-June 4, 1953

Chinese capture outposts, Rhee concedes on peace plan

by Jim Caldwell

739

May 27, 2003 - Wave after human wave of Chinese soldiers lost their lives attacking outposts in the Nevada complex 50 years ago this week in Korea, but the bloody assaults eventually convinced I Corps to fall back to its main line of resistance.

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May 29, 1953 — The Associated Press reports that the total casualties in the war for both sides now stand at more than 2.3 million. China has suffered more than one million of those casualties, while 802,000 North Koreans have been wounded and killed. There are almost 257,000 ROK casualties.



The report uses the Pentagon figures for American casualties as of May 22. They

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That afternoon Williams and Lt. Gen. Bruce C. Clarke, I Corps commander, conclude that the Chinese will continue the attacks until they control the entire Nevada complex. More than 150 Turks and Americans have been killed. Little more than 40 men, many of them wounded, hold Vegas. On Elko there are a little more than 20 and many of them are also wounded.

The Chinese have suffered an estimated 3,000 casualties, but their commanders have shown they were willing to take those losses. Clarke decides the outposts aren't important enough to justify more American and Turkish lives. That evening the troops withdraw to the main line of resistance.

Fighting shifts east to X Corps where the North Koreans capture Hill 812, four miles northeast of the Punchbowl, from the ROK 12th Infantry Division on June 1.

On June 2 Gen. Maxwell Taylor, Eighth Army commander, tells Gen. Mark Clark, U.N. Supreme Commander, of his concerns about two line positions in the I Corps and IX Corps.

Positions north of the Imjin and Hantan Rivers are on easily defended territory, but the lines are thin. If the communists hit those positions using the same human wave assaults as in the most recent battles, they could break through. Once U.N. troops pull back across the rivers, it will result in heavy losses to contain the breakthrough.

Taylor has already taken the only actions he can to try to avoid this situation. He has put his reserves on alert, increased ammunition stocks and has Fifth Air Force flying reconnaissance missions in those areas to track possible enemy movements.

continued on page 15



HISTORY LESSON —
An Iraqi woman speaks about her country's ancient history to sailors and Marines with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force at the museum near Camp Babylon, Iraq, May 25. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Arlo K. Abrahamson

Chinese capture outposts, Rhee concedes on peace plan continued

On June 4 North Koreans capture Anchor Hill in the ROK I Corps. Repeated counterattacks by the South Koreans to retake Anchor Hill results in heavy casualties among the communists, but they are losing men, too.

The counterattacks are stopped to keep from incurring more losses. ROK forces are redeployed to positions to keep the North Korean contained on the hills.

May 29-June 2 — Dealing with the communists at the truce table is not the only problem the United States must face to obtain peace in Korea. South Korean government leaders are vehemently opposed to a settlement that leaves a divided Korea. They also don't like some of the proposals in the U.S. truce plan, and their actions could wreck the U.S. peace efforts.

On May 29 acting ROK Premier Pyun Yun Tae says the South Korean Army may be pulled from the front lines to fight elsewhere. One of its missions would be to prevent the landing of "any foreign troops of the five custodial nations."

President Syngman Rhee declares May 30 that his soldiers are "men of steel" and would fight alone to unite Korea. "Peace here is up to ourselves," he said. Rhee has demanded that after a truce is signed that Chinese troops must leave Korea.

The South Koreans are opposed to India being in charge of overseeing the prisoners during the explaining period and the political conference after that. They feel that India will side with the two communist countries on the prisoner commission. They say India has a track record of voting with the Soviet Union in the U.N. General Assembly.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower meets with his political, diplomatic and military staff May 29-30 to find a way to convince Rhee to accept a peace settlement with a divided Korea.

On June 2 Rhee says he has will concede to American pressure after receiving a message from Eisenhower, "Out of gratitude to the U.S." because "common sense and wisdom require that we cooperate with the U.S. at any cost. We must accept anything the U.S. president wants, but to allow Chinese soldiers to stay in our country is similar to a death sentence."

Reporters in Seoul suspect that Rhee changed his mind because Eisenhower guaranteed South Korea security and agreed to provide various loans to the South Korean government for reconstruction after the war.

June 4 — The truce delegations meet on June 4 because on June 1 the communists request two more days to consider the U.N. proposal. Lt. Gen. William K. Harrison, chief U.N. delegate, has misgivings with only how the Reds have rewritten the proposal on what is to be done with the POWs who still refuse repatriation if their fate has not been decided at the end of 120 days. His superiors in the United States tell him not to make an issue of it at this time.

Chinese radio has been complaining about the clause that says if the issue isn't settled, the U.N. General Assembly will decide what to do with the POWs. Their sticking point is that the General Assembly, their opposition in the war, will make decisions about Chinese and North Korean prisoners.

(Editor's note: Jim Caldwell writes for the TRADOC News Service.)